

THE
DIG

Project Kickoff 1/4/91

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Overall Structure
Last update 12/21/90

In order to take advantage of the best aspects of roleplaying games and have them integrated into a SCUMM game, we're taking a "systems" approach to the various pieces of the game. None of these systems are self sufficient, but they all interrelate to form an interesting whole. This document describes the basic systems and how each relates to each other. It's important to realize that many of the systems interact indirectly, through coexistence. As a more familiar example, the insult fencing in Monkey Island isn't necessary to get from place to place, but it the player ends up dealing with opponents on the way to solve other puzzles. Remember that the systems in The Dig will be active all the time, in the sense that it's a "story simulator" as well as a specific story game.

Here are the eight subsystems:

Fix Ship: The ship you've arrived in is in trouble, and you need to fix it before you can leave. Three things are wrong: the food processor, electric power system, and main engine drive power system are damaged. Fixing them is basically a puzzle-solving effort, requiring parts from the ruins, the abandoned probes in the wilderness, and the aborigines. You'll also need some tools. Fixing the food processor and/or electric power system are non-essential, but will alleviate resource problems (see below). Fixing the main drive power is necessary to get the crew off the planet, and thus helps push the plot along as well.

Exploration&digging: You have high-tech archaeology tools and scour the planet, looking for interesting artifacts, finding out about what was once here. The actual "digging" uses two basic tools and a detection device. The tools will be a "digger" and a "duster", the chief difference being the amount of material moved, and the tricky part is to figure out when to use the duster so as to avoid damaging the items buried underfoot, which is where the detection device comes in.

Encounter system: You can use a variety of tools (some weapons (laser pistol, blowgun obtained from aborigines), some "everyday" tools like fire extinguishers, some "capture" tools like nets, cages, traps) to defend yourself from and possibly hunt the native wildlife and collect native plants and animals. This is a skill based system so the tools will have differing effects based on who uses them.

Character interaction: There's a unifying story concerning your character's dealings with the other character. The characters in the story will not be stereotypes, but will have interesting interactions with each other. We're got one male and one female character, with an overtone of romance and sexual tension. Each character is interested in being recognized as the "significant contributor" to the presumed success of any exploration on the planet, and shortly after they get the ship powered up they will split up over a difference of opinion on how to proceed. They will continue to encounter one another, and will need to team up to overcome some obstacles. Whether or not they remain antagonistic at the end of the game will be up to the player, determined by the general trend of dialog choices made during the game.

Characteristics: The people on the planet will have unique backgrounds, skills, characteristics. This will serve some of the function of roleplaying "stats", but will be manifest through behavior, not numeric displays. One character, the male, will be an engineer with a strong "hobby" interest in archaeology and deciphering ancient languages. The other will be a female biochemist with an affinity towards animals, and much skill in hunting and trapping them (although she doesn't like to kill them). She'll gain language skills by befriending a semitelepathic animal on the planet that helps her learn language directly from the aborigines.

Resource management: You have limited energy and food after the ship is damaged. Food is particularly scarce. You need to find new sources of food to survive, plant or animal, and energy as well. The best energy source will be fuel cells used by the aliens to power their vehicles and many of their devices. These problems can be tackled by hunting, trading with the local aliens, and digging, or by solving puzzles (see "Fix Ship").

Alien mystery: The only significant buildings on the planet have been abandoned for hundreds of years. The only intelligent life are aboriginal tribes living in the wilderness. Something destroyed their civilization. And they have a gift that might end all warfare among humankind. It's up to you to find out what happened, and collect your reward!

Trading: You can trade items you've found or brought with you on the ship with the aborigines, and after you've split up, with the other character.

Here's how each of these systems interacts with the others:

Fix ship/Exploration&digging: You need to find items when you dig that can fix the ship. Specifically, you need an alien air conditioner to help fix the power system, and the air conditioner is in a buried building.

Fix ship/Encounter system: In your quest to fix the ship you'll need to travel about to find parts, and you'll encounter alien animals in the process. Also, at one point alien "pack rats" will steal essential tools.

Fix ship/Character interaction: The defective ship adds to the tension, gives a reason for cooperation, but also feeds into the dramatic tension of the story. One character has more knowledge about fixing the ship, and can exchange that information for help finding food.

Fix ship/Characteristics: The character with experience in fixing ship systems will find it easier to fix the ship. The other will first need to solve the puzzle of finding a manual, and will take more time (using more food) to be able to fix it.

Fix ship/Resource management: You have to get off the planet because you are running out of resources. You can find new resources, but the only way to insure survival is to leave.

Fix ship/Alien mystery: The final repairs will be dependent on reviving/freeing the aliens. The only power plant that could serve as a spare for your ship is powering the hibernation chamber of one of the alien groups.

Fix ship/Trading: Some of the items you need will be obtainable from the aborigines or from the other character. For instance, if you cannibalize your laser gun to fix the food processor you'll want to trade with the aliens to get some sort of defensive weapon.

Exploration&digging/Encounter: Alien creatures and potentially competitive team members will block your exploration. Encounter can get you through.

Exploration&digging/Character interaction: As you dig, you'll find valuable stuff. Greed will become a factor, particularly with the character you don't control. This will give reasons for competition and distrust between the characters.

Exploration&digging/Characteristics: The archaeologist character will excel at using the digging tools, or have specialized knowledge that allows them to identify items.

Exploration&digging/Resource management: In order to survive to dig, you'll need food, air, water. To run your machines (or activate some of the alien ones) you'll need energy sources. To get energy sources you'll have to explore to find them.

Exploration&digging/Alien mystery: Libraries, universities, and the mysterious hibernaculums themselves will have to be uncovered and explored to learn the answer to the mystery.

Exploration&digging/Trading: You find many items to trade this way.

Encounter/Character interaction: As characters are hurt, the tension will increase. But a good shot from one character could save the life of the other, relieving tension, or uniting former enemies.

Encounter/Characteristics: The speed at which characters respond to an attack, the accuracy of their weapon use, and the strength with which they are wielded will be characteristic based.

Encounter/Resource management: You kill it, you eat it.

Encounter/Alien mystery: I hope you didn't kill their pets -- or them, by mistake!

Encounter/Trading: One objective of establishing communications is trading, and one tribe of aborigines will talk to you if you bring them a valuable gift first. They'll also have flocks, and will request that you capture specimens alive. You'll make the best trades by finding animals in one environment and trading them in another where they are rare or unique.

Character interaction/Characteristics: Many of the tensions will arise from the need to have the other character help you through situations, when that character may not be completely trustworthy. For example, if you play the engineer/archaeologist you'll have to depend on the biochemist's assessment that a food is safe to eat.

Character interaction/Resource management: The competing desires of the different characters will in part be driven by their level of desperation. If one individual is starving, and the other has plenty of food, a good dramatic situation presents itself.

Character interaction/Alien mystery: The mystery will gradually take on increasing importance to both the characters, and come to rule their behavior - "We've got to find out what happened before we leave." Both crewmembers will be interested in finding the "Badger Philosophies" that could bring peace to humanity -- and fame and fortune to the discoverer. They'll have to cooperate to survive and then leave the planet.

Character interaction/Trading: As above, this is your opportunity to smooth over the rift with gifts - or exploit your advantage by trading food for a valuable item to a starving fellow human!

Characteristics/Resource management: Their ability to find food or use technological resource will be based on their characteristics.

Characteristics/Alien mystery: Certain characteristics will make it easier to understand and discover the mystery, for example the linguist will be able to decipher the records left behind with less effort (means he'll have to solve fewer puzzles than the biochemist would to learn how to read). But the Biochemist/hunter will have more opportunities to befriend the aborigines, and get information from them, balancing the gameplay.

Characteristics/Trading: The engineer/language specialist will have an advantage trading with the aborigines, reflected in a better rate of exchange. But the exobiologist/hunter will find it easier to obtain animals for trade, and will be able to befriend a semi-telepathic creature that helps her get around the language barrier.

Resource management/Alien mystery: Simply, you'll have to survive to find out the answer. Looking through the ruins for sources of energy will also bring you into contact with the puzzles that describe the mystery.

Resource management/Trading: If you can't get something by exploration or wits, you may have to trade for it. This is also a backup system to make sure that players don't get too stuck -- if you're good at hunting but lousy at digging for energy pods, we'll stack the decks to make it possible for you to trade for the pods.

Alien mystery/Trading: The final key to reviving the "good" aliens lies in making the trade for the stasis timer near the end of the game. You'll have to displace a tribal Shaman in order to be allowed to have the timer.

The Dig

Characters - 2 person crew

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Lash Fredericks is something of a celebrity. A child prodigy, he could speak six languages by the age of 12, and read several more. Although he has a natural aptitude for engineering, particularly mechanical and structural, his real love has always been archaeology and ancient languages. At the age of 23 Lash made a highly publicized trip to a newly discovered planet to investigate some mysterious towers. Within hours of landing he had a message sent back to Earth; "Conclusive proof of non-human intelligence, incontrovertible evidence". Unfortunately, his eagerness had gotten the better of him. The towers turned out to have been constructed by the alien equivalent of termites. This incident ruined his reputation, and made him disdainful of animals and their intelligence. Lash did pick up a lot of firsthand knowledge of starship drive and food systems on the trip, which will help him out on Ozymandias. His main reason for interest in the expedition is the opportunity to "show the bastards" and clear his name. Major Tom used data from the probes to convince him that he'll find genuine alien artifacts there.

Fredericks, now in his late thirties, is a good looking if craggy-faced man of Ukrainian extraction, with a trace of Carribean heritage. He makes fairly good money as an engineer, but his main love is still archaeology and languages, and he never has enough cash to go where he wants and live in the extravagant style he prefers. He's been on many digs, looking for evidence of the origins of human languages. He's published a few papers, but his fiasco on Gamma Lanadae IV still haunts him, and he's never lived down the nickname XXX. He's got a large but fragile ego, and has never had a solid longterm relationship.

Lash's Mother was a VR addict, neglected him badly for her daily dose of the virtual soaps. He turned to his intellectual pursuits as reaction to being denied her attention. Perhaps she resembles exobiologist? As he was growing up, he always hoped that the next scholastic honor he brought home would finally bring her away from her interest in the holocube. He recieved some attention and a love for Jazz from his Jamaican great-grandmother until she died when he was ten. His father was a hardworking but unimaginative construction worker, who was often away for long periods on construction sites. He died when Lash was 22 in a freak crane accident, and Lash has supported his mother ever since, as she's sunk even deeper into her fantasies.

Lash is sensitive about his past, and in particular doesn't like to answer questions about his family. He's very concerned about appearances, and tries to dress well. He has a "secret virtue" -- he likes to play the saxophone, and does so quite well. He performs in a variety of dives under an assumed name, and gives the modest proceeds from his work at this anonymously to a fund for down and out musicians, fulfilling a promise he made to his great-grandmother. He's never told anyone about this work, and his jazz acquaintances (he keeps them too distant to be true friends) call him "Suits" because of the expensive clothes he wears.

Pan Fox is a lovely woman in her 20's, with red hair and a Japanese cast to her otherwise Irish features. Her father, Cosgrove Hargrove, dumped her mother after he made his first fortune, when Pan was only three, leaving her care to a succession of nannies. He had one mistress after another, much to Pan's distress. They fought constantly. Cosgrove was a successful biochemist and businessman, and made his fortune as the developer of Hair-In-A-Jug, the hair restoration formula that works. The formula was developed only through extensive (and abusive) animal testing that was done offplanet to escape Earth's anti-cruelty laws. Pan kept her head shaved between the ages of nine and eleven as a protest. From early childhood she loved animals, and was interested in what made them tick. She became extremely interested in animal rights issues, and as a small child she was a vegal (a vegetarian who won't even eat plant products processed to look or taste like meat). By the time she was twelve she had developed a more complex set of ethics, and was back to eating meat -- but only of animals she killed mercifully and butchered herself. Her father never understood her interest in animals, and worked hard to break her of her eating habits. He often told her she'd never make any money from a bunch of dumb beasts. When she was fourteen he went so far as to kill her pet rabbit while she was out one day and serve it for supper. At this final outrage, she divorced him, and went to live in a free children's home, where she was fiercely independent, spending more time with her animal friends than with people. Wishing to disconnect herself as completely as possible from him, she changed her name to Fox, one of her favorite animals. She also abandoned the first name he had given her (it had originally belonged to his favorite pornographic actress) and chose to call herself Pan, after a storybook character she admired for his resolution never to grow up. For a while she thought to become a veterinarian, but found it too depressing to constantly deal with sick or dying animals, and was more interested in the exotic animals from different worlds anyway. She studied exobiology on a scholarship, and became quite good at quietly observing or humanely capturing specimens. She became an expert at hunting and living off the land. She's been on two field trips to other planets to live in the brush and study their biospheres, and has made quite a name for herself by being so successful at her age. She sees hunting for food as an ethical alternative to her vegal stage, but kills only what she can eat, or for self defense. Pan is a

little embarrassed about her biochemical skills, which she feels tie her to her father. She's prone to discount her abilities in this area, but she's a topnotch biochemist, and is particularly skilled with a field bioanalyzer.

She's had only one serious relationship, with a fellow nicknamed Slick who she met in the home. He shared her rebellious nature, but not her love of animals. After several tempestuous years together he finally left her for an opportunity to join the Interstellar Corps. She still hasn't gotten over it. The week before Major Tom approached her, she got word from a mutual friend that Slick had become the newest husband in a clan marriage. She's excited by the idea of exploring an alien biosphere, and was particularly excited when told of the possibility of intelligent alien life by Tom. She finds the idea of intelligent aliens extremely compelling, and would love to be known as the discoverer of an alien civilization. On a more prosaic level, she figures the work will take her mind off of Slick.

Pan is most at home wearing her favorite, beat up old camouflage bodysuit, out in the wild among animals. She's often felt she likes them better than people, as they seem more honest and compassionate. Her internal mood swings are strong, but she exercises strict control over them, sharing her most intimate hopes and dreams only with animal friends. Although she'd be surprised to hear it, most people that know her consider her to be aloof, and cerebral. She likes to think of herself as close to her animal nature, and sometimes affects "animal" mannerisms, particularly feline ones. For instance, she dislikes cold temperatures, and in the winter she loves to curl up in front of a fire with a mug of hot chocolate.

What will happen to these two people? On the surface they're quite different, fascinated in the worlds of engineering, and language on the one hand, animals and biochemistry on the other. One is concerned with clothing and appearance, the other informal to the point of sloppiness (except with her work). But under the surface they have a lot in common. They're both very bright and competitive, and experts in their fields. They're both driven by a strong need for acceptance, which on Ozymandias will manifest itself as a greedy desire to grab all the limelight for the expedition from the other. Both are loners, mistrustful of others. Both are lonely, looking for someone they can trust and believe in.

The outcome is to a large extent up to the actions of the player. The characters will naturally repel each other at first, and the one the player doesn't choose to directly control will soon go off on his/her own. But they'll be drawn to each other, and choices of the correct dialogs and actions will gradually build a mutual trust -- or break it. The cooperation will be inevitable, as they're both concerned with leaving the planet, but they each want to be recognized as the

key discoverer, Pan as much because she associates Lash and his desire for wealth with her father as for her own desire to tell the world about the intelligent aliens.

There are five distinct twists to the plot at the end of the game. The expedition could end in failure, although it will take repeated near-death situations before this would happen. The player could solve the mystery by relying heavily on the help of the other character, and treating that character badly in the process. Then the other character will be recognized as the "leader" of the expedition and receive the thanks of the aliens at the end. Alternately, the player could win with a minimum of assistance, treating the other character badly, and end up as the "leader" with the other character resentful. Of the most satisfying results, the player could cooperate and win while being cool and correct but reliable to the other character. They'll share the glory, and there will then be some scenes showing how they've learned to trust, if not particularly like each other. Finally, they can cooperate and succeed while falling in love with each other. This will be the toughest thing to do, and will fall back onto one of the other paths if the player violates trust or chooses dialog that "pushes the wrong buttons" for the other character. The player will learn of these different endings through the scenes with and behavior of the other character. For example, when the player loses encounters with dangerous creatures and is nursed back to health by the other character, there will be a variety of dialog choices and responses based on their current level of trust/attraction, and the choices made can further affect that level. There will be opportunities to help each other with trades, or by giving things to the other character. If you're nice to the other character you may get some gifts of things you most need -- but be very gracious in accepting them if you want things to progress!

The Dig

Puzzle List
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The Dig, being nonlinear to a large extent, will have many puzzles and revealing cut scenes that are causally independent of each other. Also, the roleplaying elements, particularly the encounter system and trading with natives and the other crewmember, open up the possibility of many alternate solutions to the puzzles presented here that require finding specific items. Finally, please understand that the linking of some of these puzzles to specific locations and objects will be accomplished at the ongoing room layout meetings.

Find the Interlock So We Can Get Out Of Here

- Find Major Tom & the interlock
 - Follow "Pterobats"
 - OR
 - Track the suit radio (This will lead you first to the city.)
- Fight bat-creature to gain entrance to spiral offices (encounter system)
- Navigate the spiral maze (fascinating full-color map currently on display above Dave's desk)
- Shoot Major Tom down from ceiling (interlock ends up on ledge halfway down the shaft)
- Get the interlock from ledge
 - Find entrance to city (if you haven't already)
 - Get plant from botany lab OR toy crane from day-care center

 - Get to ledge above the interlock (spiral maze)
 - Use string with hook from toy crane
 - OR
 - Get to ledge below interlock (spiral maze)
 - Use plant (plant found in botany lab in Desert City)
 - Δ Get plant to grow
 - Climb plant
 - OR
 - Get to ledge above the interlock (spiral maze)
 - Knock interlock off ledge with string and hook
 - Get to ledge below interlock (spiral maze)
 - Pick up interlock

- Stick interlock in ship's computer

- Turn on computer, learn that you need activation code
- Δ Get into Major Tom's Cabin through dialog puzzle ala Dark Star
 - Convince computer that Major Tom is dead
- Find hidden password
- Give password to computer
- Try to stop computer from setting off explosion
 - Attempt to convince computer that Major Tom is NOT dead
 - Fail

- Listen to earth-shattering kaboom
- Check ship for damage
 - Assess food processor damage
 - Assess power system damage
 - Assess engine damage
- Try to stop the other character from abandoning you
- Fail
- Wonder why you came to this god-forsaken planet in the first place (alien mystery)

Fixing the Nutrimax™ Food Processor

- If you're not an engineer, find a manual
- Get some tools

- Replace coolant element
 - Δ Locate probe in the coastal area
 - Remove coolant element from probe

- Replace concave reflector
 - Get rusty spoon from alien fast-food joint
 - Get scale polish from alien body shop]
 - Polish spoon

- Replace filter
 - Δ Get alien air-blower from genetics lab or spot to be named later
 - Open air-blower, remove filter screen

Fixing the Spark-O-Matic™ Power Generator

- Clean the gunk out of the generator
 - Δ Get alien air-blower from genetics lab or spot to be named later
 - Attach a power cell to the air-conditioner
 - Use blower in reverse to vacuum out the schmutz

Δ Replace fried conductor
Δ Cannibalize a human gadget

- Replace flatulistat
 - Find jungle probe
 - Cut through quick-growing jungle foliage
 - Get flatulistat from jungle probe
- OR
- Trade mountain tribe for flatulistat they obtained from nearby probe

Repowering the Volkswagen Main Drive

- Use ship controls to view map of planet showing 3 large sources of power
- Find the jungle city power source (in The Citadel)
- Get into The Citadel
 - Drive tank through wall
 - Fuel up tank
 - Start up tank (gadget puzzle or learn from native)

Δ Get through citadel maze and past the defenses of the bad aliens in the jungle city using tools found in the malfunctioning desert complex and elsewhere.

- Get map from not-so-friendly jungle tribe
 - Find way in through ventilation shaft
 - Trade jungle tribe for extremely valuable card-key access device to disarm some defenses
-
- Discover the bad aliens' power plant.
 - Shut down the bad aliens' power plant.
 - Disconnect the bad aliens' power plant.
 - Notice the bad aliens as they wake up.
 - Talk to them briefly before they clap you in irons. (Perhaps you betray the location of your ship.)
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- Escape from jail with the aid of the jungle tribe and their camouflage potion
 - Get some of the potion from the natives, but not the smoke (activator)
 - Discover your ship now guarded by some evil aliens.
 - Realize the necessity of resuscitating good aliens.

Whoops! Waking Up The Good Guys

- Prove to the coasties that you possess important sacred knowledge
 - Gather some info from other tribes
 - Read book on Badger philosophy
 - Dig out card catalog in library
 - Use catalog to locate books
 - (• Also find reference to newspaper, see below)
 - Print newspaper to get final, critical information
 - Get document from museum (use back for paper)
 - Oil printing machine
 - Trade natives for arthritis remedy (useful as oil)
 - OR
 - Learn from tribe, zoo or book about useful animal fat
 - Hunt animal
 - Boil animal to extract oil
 - Get ink for machine
 - Get fingerpaint from child care center
 - Get alien wine gone bad
 - Thin paint with wine to use as ink
 - OR
 - Learn from tribe, zoo or book about a plant or animal
 - Hunt animal or gather plant
 - Extract ink
- Obtain the sacred garb
 - Get a hat from a fast-food joint in any city other than the coastal one
- Defeat the coastal shaman in a duel of skill and magic (now that you're worthy)
 - Play the sacred music
 - Get music "cd" from record store
 - Get player from body shop
 - Dope out the controls to the player
 - Cheat in the grand tradition established by Milli Vanilli
 - Use a magic wand to create magical effect
 - Realize that the shaman is using a prop to create a light show
 - Get a wand that doesn't work (dig it up)
 - Δ Sneak into the shaman's hut
 - Switch wands on him
 - Cheat again
 - Demonstrate the ability to vanish
 - Use the potion you got from the jungle tribe when the shaman makes his puff of smoke

- Shaman uses a gadget against you that you don't have (at least not one that works).
 - When you're alone, give the shaman back his wand (he'll ask for it, he knows what you did)
 - Get the timer from the natives, you've earned it.
- Δ Get through maze into the good aliens hibernaculum (either one).
- Use the timer and wake them up.

Finale (At Last You Prove Your Worth)

- Get Badger philosophy tape from good aliens
- Return to jungle city
- Connect tape to alien revival headset re-education tape
- Live happily ever after along with everyone else